

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application for:

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First Named Inventor: Chan

Art Unit: 2614

Appln. No.: 10/736,923

Examiner: Gauthier, G.

For: Client Customizable Interactive Voice Response System **Confirmation No.: 5335**

* * *

APPEAL BRIEF

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicants hereby appeal to the Board of Appeals from the Notice of Appeal filed June 4, 2008. A single copy of this Appeal Brief is being submitted pursuant to MPEP §1205.02.

(i) REAL PARTY IN INTEREST.

All right, title, and interest in this application has been assigned to Avaya Technology Corp, Basking Ridge, NJ. The Assignment is recorded at Reel/Frame 014810/0206.

(i i) RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES.

There are no related appeals, interferences or judicial proceedings known to Appellant, or Appellants' legal representative which may be related to, directly affect, be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending Appeal.

(i i i) STATUS OF CLAIMS.

Claims 1-49 are pending.

All claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of Gallagher and Niedereder and are the subject of this Appeal.

Claim 24 is also rejected as not being directed toward non-statutory subject matter.

(iv) STATUS OF AMENDMENTS.

By virtue of the May 15 Advisory Action, the Amendment After Final filed May 1, 2008 was not entered. Thus, the Pending Claims are those filed with the December 19, 2007 Amendment.

(v) SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER.

Pending Independent Claims 1 and 26, recited in the Claims Appendix which is appended hereto, are directed to an IVR. (Figs. 2A-2B and the Specification) Independent Claim 49 is directed to an electronic memory in a contact center. (Figs. 2A-2B and the Specification)

One embodiment, which is the subject of Independent Claim 1, is directed to a method for customizing an Interactive Voice Response unit (Field of the Invention, Figs. 2A—2B), comprising:

providing an interactive voice response unit (IVR), the IVR comprising a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure (Summary of the Invention, pg 6, lines 1-2, 7-13, pg. 13, lines 6-15, Figs. 1A-1C, 3-6);

receiving, from the user, a request to change the menu structure wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6);

effecting the requested change to the menu structure (pg. 5 lines 22+); and
associating the changed menu structure with the requesting user (pg. 5, lines 23+).

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 2 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the IVR comprises resource cards to handle digit collection from dual tone multi-frequency telephones, automatic speech recognition resources to detect user voice responses, and voice processing resources to record the user's prompts. (Fig. 2B, pg. 13, 2nd paragraph)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 3 is directed to the method of Claim 1, further comprising:

providing the user with at least two of the following options:
creating a new navigation path;
hiding a menu option;
editing a new navigation path;
adding an authentication requirement to a selected menu; and
deleting an authentication requirement from a selected menu. (pg. 6, lines 7-13)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 4 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change includes creation of new navigation path. (Fig. 3, pg. 14, lines 21+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 5 is directed to the method of Claim 4, wherein the effecting and associating steps comprise:

creating a new navigation path at a location selected by the user;
saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user;
and

recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path. (pg. 8, lines 9+, pg. 6, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 6 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is a change to a new navigation path configured by the user. (pg. 8, lines 9+, pg. 6, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 7 is directed to the method of Claim 5, wherein, in the creating and saving steps, a current position vector of the user is saved and associated with the user. (pg. 6, lines 17+, pg. 17, lines 8+, pg. 19, step 6)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 8 is directed to the method of Claim 5, further comprising:

playing the recorded prompt to the user the next time the user is serviced by the IVR. (Fig. 2B. pg. 13, lines 9+, pg. 19, step 7)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 9 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to hide at least one of a menu and an option. (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6, Fig. 7B, pg. 34, lines 7+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 10 is directed to the method of Claim 9, wherein the effecting and associating steps comprise:

adding the at least one of a menu and an option to a set of menus and/or options to hide in a selected navigation path; and

saving the modified set of menus and/or options in a configuration file associated with the user. (Fig. 5, pg. 22, lines 6+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 11 is directed to the method of Claim 9, further comprising:

receiving a request from the user to play the hidden at least one of a menu and an option; and

playing the at least one of a menu and an option to the user. (Fig. 5, pg. 22, lines 6+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 12 is directed to the method of Claim 11, further comprising:

determining whether the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden;

when the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden, performing the effecting and associating steps; and

when the at least one of a menu and an option is ineligible to be hidden, not performing the effecting and associating steps. (Fig. 5, pg. 7, lines 11+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 13 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to add an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 1C, 3, and 6, pg. 24, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 14 is directed to the method of Claim 13, further comprising:

prompting the user to enter authentication information; and

prompting the user at least one of to attach a file, enter a pathname to the file; and to record a message to play to an authenticated user. (Pg. 24, lines 20+, Fig. 6)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 15 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to delete an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 16 is directed to the method of Claim 15, further comprising:

prompting the user to enter authentication information;

validating the entered authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the effecting step; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the effecting step. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 17 is directed to the method of Claim 3, wherein the user is provided with all of the options. (Pg. 6, lines 18+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 18 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the menu structure is associated with a server-based account of the user and further comprising, before the receiving step:

prompting the user for authentication information;

receiving the authentication information;

validating the authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the receiving step; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the receiving step. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 19 is directed to the method of Claim 6, further comprising:

selecting a shortcut code and associating the shortcut code with the new navigation path, whereby the user selects the new navigation path by entering the shortcut code. (Fig. 3, Fig. 4, pg. 25, lines 19+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 20 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the change request is received through at least one of an audio and visual interface. (Pg. 14, lines 1-13)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 21 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is an edit to a new navigation path previously configured by the user. (Pg. 16, lines 5+, lines 16+, Pg. 15, lines 16+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 22 is directed to the method of Claim 11, further comprising:

restoring the hidden at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 5, step 670)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 23 is directed to the method of Claim 1, wherein the IVR is associated with a plurality of user accounts, each user account corresponding to a unique user, wherein each user has a corresponding set of

changes to the menu structure, and wherein the sets of changes are different from one another. (Pg. 8, lines 10+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 24 is directed to a computer readable medium comprising instructions to perform the steps of Claim 1. (Pg. 35, lines 7+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 25 is directed to a logic circuit configured to perform the steps of Claim 1. (Pg. 35, lines 7+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of Independent Claim 26 is directed to an Interactive Voice Response unit (IVR), comprising: (Field of the Invention, Figs. 2A—2B)

a processor operable to:

a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure; (Summary of the Invention, pg 6, lines 1-2, 7-13, pg. 13, lines 6-15, Figs. 1A-1C, 3-6)

receive, from the user, a request to change the menu wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus; (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6)

effect the requested change to the menu structure; and (pg. 5 lines 22+) associate the changed menu structure with the requesting user. (pg. 5, lines 23+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 7 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, further comprising:

resource cards to handle digit collection from dual tone multi-frequency telephones,

automatic speech recognition resources to detect user voice responses, and voice processing resources to record the user's prompts. (Fig. 2B, pg. 13, 2nd paragraph)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 28 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the processor is further operable to provide the user with at least two of the following options:

creating a new navigation path;
hiding a menu option;
editing a new navigation path;
adding an authentication requirement to a selected menu; and
deleting an authentication requirement from a selected menu. (pg. 6, lines 7-13)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 29 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change includes creation of new navigation path. (Fig. 3, pg. 14, lines 21+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 30 is directed to the IVR of Claim 28, wherein the effecting and associating functions comprise the operations of:

creating a new navigation path at a location selected by the user;
saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user;
and
recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path. (pg. 8, lines 9+, pg. 6, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 31 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is a change to a new navigation path configured by the user. (pg. 8, lines 9+, pg. 6, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 32 is directed to the IVR of Claim 30, wherein, in the creating and saving operations, a current position vector of the user is saved in a file associated with the user. (pg. 6, lines 17+, pg. 17, lines 8+, pg. 19, step 6)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 33 is directed to the IVR of Claim 30, wherein the processor is further operable to play the recorded prompt to the user the next time the user is serviced by the IVR. (Fig. 2B. pg. 13, lines 9+, pg. 19, step 7)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 34 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to hide at least one of a menu and an option. (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6, Fig. 7B, pg. 34, lines 7+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 35 is directed to the IVR of Claim 34, wherein the effecting and associating functions comprise the operations of:

adding the at least one of a menu and an option to a set of menus and/or options to hide in a selected navigation path; and

saving the modified set of menus and/or options in a configuration file associated with the user. (Fig. 5, pg. 22, lines 6+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 36 is directed to the IVR of Claim 34, wherein the processor is further operable to receive a request from the user to play the hidden at least one of a menu and an option and play the at least one of a menu and an option to the user. (Fig. 5, pg. 22, lines 6+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 37 is directed to the IVR of Claim 36, wherein the processor is further operable to:

determine whether the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden;

when the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden, perform the effecting and associating functions; and

when the at least one of a menu and an option is ineligible to be hidden, not perform the effecting and associating functions. (Fig. 5, pg. 7, lines 11+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 38 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to add an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 1C, 3, and 6, pg. 24, lines 14+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 39 is directed to the IVR of Claim 38, wherein the processor is further operable to:

prompt the user to enter authentication information; and

prompt the user at least one of to attach a file, enter a pathname to the file; and to record a message to play to an authenticated user. (Pg. 24, lines 20+, Fig. 6)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 40 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to delete an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 41 is directed to the IVR of Claim 40, wherein the processor is further operable to:

prompt the user to enter authentication information;

validate the entered authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, perform the effecting function; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not perform the effecting function. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 42 is directed to the IVR of Claim 28, wherein the user is provided with all of the options. (Pg. 6, lines 18+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 43 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the menu structure is associated with a server-based account of the user and wherein the processor is further operable to perform, before the receiving function, the functions of:

prompting the user for authentication information;

receiving the authentication information;

validating the authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the receiving function; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the receiving function. (Fig. 6, pg. 25, lines 3+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 44 is directed to the IVR of Claim 29, wherein the processor is further operable to select a shortcut code and associate the shortcut code with the new navigation path, whereby the user selects the new navigation path by entering the shortcut code. (Fig. 3, Fig. 4, pg. 25, lines 19+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 45 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, further comprising:

at least one of an audio and visual interface. (Pg. 14, lines 1-13)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 46 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is an edit to a new navigation path previously configured by the user. (Pg. 16, lines 5+, lines 16+, Pg. 15, lines 16+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 47 is directed to the IVR of Claim 36, wherein the processor is further operable to restore the hidden at least one of a menu and an option. (Fig. 5, step 670)

One embodiment, which is the subject of dependent Claim 48 is directed to the IVR of Claim 26, wherein the IVR is associated with a plurality of user accounts, each user account corresponding to a unique user, wherein each user has a corresponding set of changes to the menu structure, and wherein the sets of changes are different from one another. (Pg. 8, lines 10+)

One embodiment, which is the subject of Independent Claim 49 is directed to an electronic memory in a contact center, comprising:

first and second user identifiers;

a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure; (Summary of the Invention, pg 6, lines 1-2, 7-13, pg. 13, lines 6-15, Figs. 1A-1C, 3-6)

a first set of changes to the menu structure associated with the first user identifier; and (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6, Fig. 7B, pg. 34, lines 7+)

a second set of changes to the menu structure associated with the second user identifier, wherein the first and second sets are different, and (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6, Fig. 7B, pg. 34, lines 7+)

wherein, one or more of the first and second set of changes to the menu structure include one or more of a request to hide a portion of a menu and a request to require authentication for a portion of a menu. (Summary of the Invention, pg. 7, 1st full paragraph, 2nd full paragraph, Fig. 3, Fig. 5, Fig 6, Fig. 7B, pg. 34, lines 7+)

While the above references to the specification and figures provide examples of where the claimed features are supported, these references are non-limiting and one or more other portions of the specification and/or figures may also support the claimed features.

(vi) GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL.

Whether Claims 1-49 are obvious in view of U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0043978 A1 to Gallagher (hereinafter "Gallagher") in view of U.S. Patent 7,220,941 to Niedereder (hereinafter "Niedereder") under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Appellants do not hereby Appeal the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §101.

(vii) ARGUMENTS.

Appellants respectfully submit based on the following remarks that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established. Specifically:

- *All of the claimed features are not disclosed*
- *The asserted combination renders the reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose*
- *Technically inaccurate correlations are made between the claimed features and the limitations of the references*
- *The relied upon motivation for combination is defective, inaccurate and/or are based on hindsight*
- *The rejection is only based on conclusory statements*
- *The requirements under KSR that the rejection must be supported by some rationale have not been met*

1. *Whether Claims 1-49 are obvious in view of U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0043978 A1 to Gallagher (hereinafter “Gallagher”) in view of U.S. Patent 7,220,941 to Niedereeder (hereinafter “Niedereeder”) under 35 U.S.C. §103.*

1.1. Claims 1, 26 and 49

Independent claims 1 and 26 are directed toward an IVR and recite “wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus.”

Independent claim 49 is directed toward a memory in a contact center and recites “wherein, one or more of the first and second set of changes to the menu structure include one or more of a request to hide a portion of a menu and a request to require authentication for a portion of a menu.”

Gallagher is directed to a system and method for providing a Lightweight Directory Application Protocol (LDAP) version of a telephone user interface, such as Interactive Voice Response (IVR). A user’s telephone number corresponds to an entry in the LDAP directory. The directory entry maps the telephone number to other entries in the directory.

The Office Action concedes that Gallagher *does not* disclose a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus.

Niedereder is relied upon for this teaching and relates to a multi-functional remote controller (27) for a welding apparatus and a welding current source, which remote controller can be connected to the welding apparatus and the welding current source by at least one line, the remote controller (27) having setting elements and switching elements and at least one display unit. The remote controller (27) has memory, in particular a memory card, and at least one additional interface, in particular a USB terminal, and the various parameters, functions and/or operating modes are set and edited by a menu-driven system. In Niedereder, when the profile has been set up, (presumably by a supervisor) the user can access only those menu items and tabs authorized by this profile and the other disabled menu items and tabs are not displayed or are shown as disabled.

The objective of Niedereder is achieved due to the fact that settings are entered and authorizations and profiles assigned via the remote controller, thereby giving the user access to the menu items authorized for a particular profile, depending on the user profile set from the remote controller, whilst the other menu items are masked or disabled.

The Office Action asserts it would have been obvious to modify Gallagher's invention using the teaching of the control unit menu as taught by Neidereder since "it enables the system to add a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus so that the user would only be able to operate those menus" – the relied upon motivation appears to be taken directly from Appellant's claim language.

The Federal Circuit has stated that "rejections based on obviousness cannot be sustained with mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." *In re Kahn*, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329, 1336 (Fed. Cir. 2006). See also KSR, 550 U.S. at ___, 82 USPQ2d at 1396 (quoting Federal Circuit statement with approval).

Appellants respectfully submit the rejection is not only based on conclusory statements, but the asserted combination renders the reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, the recited features are not present in either reference and the requirements under KSR that the rejection must be supported by some rationale have not been met.

Specifically, in order for a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 to be proper, clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious should

be stated by the Examiner in the Office Action and must be supported by some rationale which may include one of the following:

- (A) Combining prior art elements according to known methods to yield predictable results;
- (B) Simple substitution of one known element for another to obtain predictable results;
- (C) Use of known technique to improve similar devices (methods, or products) in the same way;
- (D) Applying a known technique to a known device (method, or product) ready for improvement to yield predictable results;
- (E) "Obvious to try" - choosing from a finite number of identified, predictable solutions, with a reasonable expectation of success;
- (F) Known work in one field of endeavor may prompt variations of it for use in either the same field or a different one based on design incentives or other market forces if the variations are predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art; or
- (G) Some teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the prior art that would have led one of ordinary skill to modify the prior art reference or to combine prior art reference teachings to arrive at the claimed invention.

The Supreme Court further noted in KSR that the analysis supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 should be made explicit. (MPEP §2143) - The Official Actions *have not*, however, shown that the pending claims are obvious in view of any of the above-listed rationales nor have they made explicit an analysis to support a legally defendable rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Appellants further respectfully submit the Office Action's asserted combinability of the references is untenable. Specifically, given the diversely different technologies of the two references (an IVR (i.e., voice) based navigation system and a text-based (visible) menu on a welder), one of ordinary skill in the IVR menu arts would not have looked to the text-based menu system of Niedereider to solve the recognized deficiency in the art.

The combination of the cited references' teachings are also technically incompatible, and the combination would also be inoperative in that the interaction and technology utilized with a text-based menu architecture is entirely different than an IVR-based system.

The correlation of a text-based menu to an IVR-based system is also technically inaccurate.

This is evidenced in that an Interactive Voice Response, or IVR, is a phone technology that allows a computer to detect voice and touch tones using a normal phone call. The IVR system can respond with pre-recorded or dynamically generated audio to further direct callers on how to proceed. IVR systems can be used to control almost any function where the interface can be broken down into a series of simple menu choices. Once constructed, IVR systems generally scale well to handle large call volumes.

DTMF signals (entered from the telephone keypad) and natural language speech recognition interpret the caller's response to voice prompts. Other technologies include the ability to speak complex and dynamic information such as an e-mail, news report or weather information using Text-To-Speech (TTS). TTS is computer generated synthesized speech that is no longer the robotic voice generally associated with computers. Real voices create the speech in tiny fragments that are concatenated before being played to a caller.

An IVR can be utilized in several different ways:

1. Equipment installed on the customer premise
2. Equipment installed in the PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network)
3. Application service provider (ASP).
4. Virtual Hosted IVR

Many business applications employ this technology including telephone banking, order placement, caller identification and routing, balance inquiry, and airline ticket booking.

Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) is often the first point of contact when calling many larger businesses. An ACD uses digital storage devices to play greetings or announcements, but typically routes a caller without prompting for input. An IVR can play announcements and request input from the caller. This information can be used to route the call to a particular skillset.

Interactive Voice Response can be used to front-end a call center operation by identifying the needs of the caller. Information can be obtained from the caller such as an account number. Answers to simple questions such as account balances or pre-recorded information can be provided without operator intervention. Account numbers from the IVR are often compared to caller ID data for security reasons and additional IVR responses are required if the caller ID data does not match the account record.

IVR call flows are created in a variety of ways. Traditional IVR depended upon proprietary programming or scripting languages, whereas modern IVR applications are

structured similar to WWW pages, using VoiceXML, SALT or T-XML languages. The ability to use XML developed applications allows a Web server to act as an application server, freeing the developer to focus on the call flow.

It is widely believed that developers require specialized programming skills as IVR applications and programmers need to understand the human reaction to the application dialogue to create a good user experience – this understanding is not required for text-based menu design.

Higher level IVR development tools are available to simplify the application development process. A call flow diagram can be drawn with a GUI tool and the application code (VoiceXML or SALT) can be automatically generated. In addition, these tools normally provide extension mechanisms for software integration, such as HTTP interface to web site and Java interface for connecting to a database.

In telecommunications, an audio response unit (ARU) is a device that provides synthesized voice responses to touch-tone keypresses (DTMF) by processing calls based on (a) the call-originator input, (b) information received from a database, and (c) information in the incoming call, such as the time of day. ARUs increase the number of information calls handled and to provide consistent quality in information retrieval.

In sharp contrast, text-based menus (such as those described in Niederederer) are computer-based menus that use a *visible* graphical user interface which presents menu items with a combination of text and symbols to represent choices. Menus typically list commands for presentation to an operator by a computer. They may be thought of as shortcuts to frequently used commands that avoid the operator having to have a detailed knowledge or recall of syntax. A menu is used in contrast to a command line interface where instructions to the computer are given in the form of commands (or verbs).

By reading and selecting or clicking on one of the symbols in a text menu, the operator is selecting the instruction that the symbol represents. A common use of menus is to provide convenient access to various operations such as saving or opening a file, quitting a program, or manipulating data. Most widget toolkits provide some form of pull-down or pop-up menu. Pull-down menus are the type commonly used in menu bars (usually near the top of a window or screen), which are most often used for performing actions, whereas pop-up menus are used for setting a value.

Clearly, these are two divergent technologies whose combinability has not been proven by the Office.

Given the lack of evidence, features and motivation supporting the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103, Appellants believe the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection is untenable, defective and should be withdrawn.

Additionally, the asserted combination of references also does not replicate the claimed invention due to the claimed combination of features not being found in either reference, the fundamental differences between one of the references (e.g., Niedereder) and the invention, the cited references being in widely divergent fields of endeavor, and the lack of any articulable rationale in the Office Actions to support the legal conclusion of obviousness. The rejection is also clearly based on a hindsight reconstruction of the invention in view of the Appellant's own disclosure and claimed features.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion of the claimed combination of features, the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.2. Claims 2 and 27

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 2 and 27 are generally directed toward digit collection from dual tone multi-frequency telephones, automatic speech recognition resources to detect user voice responses, and voice processing resources to record the user's prompts.

Niedereder has no ability to perform these functions. Gallagher fails to overcome the deficiencies of Niedereder for the claimed combination of features.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.3. Claims 3 and 28

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 3 and 28 are generally directed toward providing the user with at least two of the following options: creating a new navigation path; hiding a menu option; editing a new navigation path; adding an authentication requirement to a selected menu; and deleting an authentication requirement from a selected menu.

As admitted by the Office, Gallagher *does not* disclose a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus. Niedereeder does not disclose creation or editing of a new navigation path nor the deletion of an authentication requirement.

Para. 64 of Gallagher, which is relied upon for this teaching, speaks of modifying menu entries but does not teach, suggest or disclose creating a new navigation path.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.4. Claims 4 and 29

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereeder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 4 and 29 are generally directed toward the requested change including creation of new navigation path.

Niedereeder only mentions that “If the working level has sub-levels, it enables new parameters, operating modes, etc., to be added to the remote controller, without having to modify the basic structure of the user interface.”

There is no teaching of creating a new navigation path as claimed.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.5. Claims 5 and 30

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereeder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 5 and 30 are directed toward creating a new navigation path at a location selected by the user; saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user; and recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path.

In that neither reference teaches or suggests the creation of a new navigation path, both references are also devoid of any teaching of saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user and recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.6. Claims 6 and 31

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereeder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 6 and 31 are generally directed toward the requested change being a change to a new navigation path configured by the user.

In that Gallagher and Niedereeder fail to teach, suggest or disclose the ability to create a new navigation path, the references also fail to teach or suggest the claimed feature of changing to a new navigation path configured by the user.

While the Office Action point to para. 62 of Gallagher, Gallagher only discloses “... This allows the user to do such things as select the order in which options are provided to the user, to modify the announcements in the system prompts, to select between key press (i.e. DTMF) and voice responses to IVR prompts, and the like.” There is no teaching of creating a new navigation path.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.7. Claims 7 and 32

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 7 and 32 are generally directed toward for the creating and saving steps, a current position vector of the user is saved and associated with the user. Text-based menu's do not use current position vectors. Gallagher has absolutely no teaching or suggestion of a current position vector. While para. 63 of Gallagher is relied upon for this teaching, the referenced paragraph is silent about a current position vector.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.8. Claims 8 and 33

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 8 ad 13 are generally directed toward playing the recorded prompt to the user the next time the user is serviced by the IVR.

Neither Gallagher nor Niedereder teach, suggest or disclose the ability to record a prompt, let alone the ability to play the recorded prompt as claimed. While the Office Action points to para. 63 of Gallagher, para. 63 only discloses the ability to select "a long announcement...or a short announcement..." – not a recorded prompt as claimed.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.9. Claims 9 and 34

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 9 and 34 are generally directed toward the requested change hiding at least one of a menu and an option.

Niedereder discloses the ability to set parameters and settings options from the remote controller, and that all possible settings can be entered from the remote controller, dispensing with the need to enter settings directly at the welding apparatus.

Niedereder is silent regarding hiding an option(s).

The Office Action points to para. 62 of Gallagher for this teaching. However, paragraph 62 only teaches selecting an order in which options are provided to a user. Specifically, para. 62 recites "...This allows the user to do such things as select the order in which options are provided to the user, to modify the announcements in the system prompts, to select between key press (i.e. DTMF) and voice responses to IVR prompts, and the like." Clearly this passage is devoid of the claimed feature.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.10. Claims 10 and 35

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 10 and 35 are generally directed toward adding the at least one of a menu and an option to a set of menus and/or options to hide in a selected navigation path; and saving the modified set of menus and/or options in a configuration file associated with the user.

Again, para. 62 of Gallagher is relied upon. For the Board's convenience para. 62 states in its entirety:

[0062] Once a user has been identified, in step 704, a preferred IVR menu format for the user is identified from information in the user's account entry in the LDAP directory. This information is then used to modify the system's IVR menu in step 705. This allows the user to do such things as select the order in which options are provided to the user, to modify the announcements in the system prompts, to select between key press (i.e. DTMF) and voice responses to IVR prompts, and the like.

The features asserted by the Office as being present are simply not taught, suggested or disclosed.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.11. Claims 11 and 36

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 11 and 36 are generally directed toward receiving a request from the user to play the hidden at least one of a menu and an option; and playing the at least one of a menu and an option to the user.

Para. 63 of Gallagher recites:

[0063] As a result, a new user can modify the system's IVR menus to mimic the menus of other systems with which the user is familiar, thereby avoiding the need for the user to learn new menus and prompts for a new system. The user could also select between long and short prompts in the announcement messages. For example, the user would have the option of hearing a long announcement (e.g. "To access your voice mail, please press 1; to access your e-mail please press 2; . . . ") or a short announcement (e.g. "Voice Mail 1; E-mail 2, . . . "). This would allow an expert or frequent user to simplify the system menus, while allowing new users to use longer prompts with more detailed explanation. This simplification can be easily accomplished by modifying the user account directory entry or one of the user's menu directory entries.

The claimed feature is not present in the relied upon passage.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.12. Claims 12 and 37

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 12 and 37 are generally directed toward determining whether the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden; when the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden, performing the effecting and associating steps; and when the at least one of a menu and an option is ineligible to be hidden, not performing the effecting and associating steps.

While the Office Action relies on paragraph 65 Gallagher for the teaching of the menu and an option being eligible to be hidden, as recited in Claims 12 and 37, Appellants respectfully submit there is no teaching, suggestion, or disclosure of this feature, nor even any recognition of the ability to determine whether an option is eligible to be hidden as claimed.

For the Board's convenience, this is evidenced by the teaching of para. 65 which recites:

[0065] Alternatively, the host messaging system, such as message server 102, may provide a configuration interface so that the user may select features of a desired user interface. The host messaging system would then create the appropriate user account LDAP directory entry and/or menu LDAP directory entries to provide the selected user interface features. The configuration interface may be presented via the user's telephone 101. For example, the messaging system may prompt the user to enter a telephone number and PIN, or the user may be prompted to enable various messaging options, such as voice mail, e-mail or fax messages. The messaging system would then use these inputs to create the proper directory entries.

Clearly the claimed feature is lacking.

At least based on these differences, and the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.13. Claims 13 and 38

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 13 and 38 are generally directed toward wherein the requested change is to add an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option.

The Office Action of March 5, 2008 states on page 3 that "Gallagher fails to disclose a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus," but then asserts para. 63 of Gallagher teaches this feature on page 6 of the *same* Office Action.

Para. 63 states:

[0063] As a result, a new user can modify the system's IVR menus to mimic the menus of other systems with which the user is familiar, thereby avoiding the need for the user to learn new menus and prompts for a new system. The user could also select between long and short prompts in the announcement messages. For example, the user would have the option of hearing a long announcement (e.g. "To access your voice mail, please press 1; to access your e-mail please press 2; . . . ") or a short announcement (e.g. "Voice Mail 1; E-mail 2, . . . "). This would allow an expert or frequent user to simplify the system menus, while allowing new users to use longer prompts with more detailed explanation. This simplification can be easily accomplished by modifying the user account directory entry or one of the user's menu directory entries.

Appellants agree with the Office Action in that Gallagher is lacking any teaching or suggestion of the claimed feature(s). In that the cited references fail to each or suggest the claimed combination of features, the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.14. Claims 14 and 39

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 14 and 39 are directed toward prompting the user to at least one of attach a file, enter a path name to a file and to record a message to play to an authenticated user. While the Office Action points to paragraph 56 of Gallagher for this teaching, no reasonable interpretation of this paragraph would lead one to conclude that the subject claims are taught or suggested.

The claims are thus patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.15. Claims 15 and 40

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 15 and 40 are directed toward the ability to delete an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option. Since Gallagher fails to teach, suggest or disclose an authentication requirement in general, Gallagher is also deficient in teaching, suggesting or disclosing the claimed feature.

While para. 62 is again relied upon in the Final Office Action, Appellants respectfully submit that the Office cannot concede that Gallagher fails to disclose an authentication requirement than assert that the reference teaches the deletion of an authentication requirement.

In that the rejection is defective ab initio, the Board is respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.16. Claims 16 and 41

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments, and especially those in para. 1.15., in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

In that the rejection is defective ab initio, the Board is respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.17. Claims 17 and 42

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 17 and 42 are directed toward providing a user with all of the options. Contrary to the assertions in the Office Action, Gallagher is silent regarding any teaching, suggestion or disclosure of this feature.

In the absence of any teaching or suggestion in the references of the claimed feature(s), the claims are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.18. Claims 18 and 43

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 18 and 43 are generally directed toward, before the receiving step (i.e., receiving, from the user, a request to change the menu structure wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus):

prompting the user for authentication information;

receiving the authentication information;

validating the authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the receiving step; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the receiving step.

While the relied upon paragraph of Gallagher teaches password authentication, the reference does not teach the claimed combination of features.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.19. Claims 19 and 44

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Regarding Claims 19 and 44, Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching, suggestion or disclosure of the claimed shortcut code and associating step. Specifically, para. 59 recites:

[0059] The announcement that is played in tuioption attribute 602 is a compound message that ends in \$num. This variable tells the system to play whatever number is expected as a response. This method allows for dynamic number selection so that any telephone key could be used. The action that is performed is vm_retrieve, which could call a function for playing voice mail messages. Tuioption 603 is an example attribute that allows the user to retrieve fax messages, and tuioption 604 allows the user to retrieve e-mail messages.

In that the claimed features are not present, the Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.20. Claims 20 and 45

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed combination of features.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.21. Claims 21 and 46

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 21 and 46 are generally directed toward the requested change being an edit to a new navigation path previously configured by the user.

As outlined above, para. 62 relied upon in the Office Action does not teach or suggest this feature.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.22. Claims 22 and 47

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the claimed features.

Claims 22 and 47 are generally directed toward restoring the hidden at least one of a menu and an option.

Paragraph 62 of Gallagher is devoid of this teaching - the Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

1.23. Claims 23 and 48

Appellants hereby incorporate the above arguments in support of the Appeal of the current rejection and reiterate that Gallagher and Niedereder, taken either alone or in combination, fail to teach, suggest or disclose the combination of claimed features.

The Board is thus respectfully requested to overturn the rejection.

Conclusion

At least since the cited references fail to teach or suggest every claimed feature, whether taken alone or in combination, and the conditions to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 have not been satisfied, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established - the Board is respectfully requested to overturn the above rejections.

Remand to the Examiner with an indication of allowable subject matter is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to deposit account number 19-1970 (4366-152) any fees under 37 CFR § 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby petitioned.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 18 July '08

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(viii) CLAIMS APPENDIX.

1. A method for customizing an Interactive Voice Response unit, comprising:

providing an interactive voice response unit (IVR), the IVR comprising a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure;

receiving, from the user, a request to change the menu structure wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus;

effecting the requested change to the menu structure; and

associating the changed menu structure with the requesting user.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the IVR comprises resource cards to handle digit collection from dual tone multi-frequency telephones, automatic speech recognition resources to detect user voice responses, and voice processing resources to record the user's prompts.

3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

providing the user with at least two of the following options:

creating a new navigation path;

hiding a menu option;

editing a new navigation path;

adding an authentication requirement to a selected menu; and

deleting an authentication requirement from a selected menu.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change includes creation of new navigation path.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the effecting and associating steps comprise:

creating a new navigation path at a location selected by the user;

saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user;

and

recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is a change to a new navigation path configured by the user.

7. The method of Claim 5, wherein, in the creating and saving steps, a current position vector of the user is saved and associated with the user.

8. The method of Claim 5, further comprising:
playing the recorded prompt to the user the next time the user is serviced by the IVR.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to hide at least one of a menu and an option.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein the effecting and associating steps comprise:

adding the at least one of a menu and an option to a set of menus and/or options to hide in a selected navigation path; and

saving the modified set of menus and/or options in a configuration file associated with the user.

11. The method of Claim 9, further comprising:
receiving a request from the user to play the hidden at least one of a menu and an option; and

playing the at least one of a menu and an option to the user.

12. The method of Claim 11, further comprising:
determining whether the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden;

when the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden, performing the effecting and associating steps; and

when the at least one of a menu and an option is ineligible to be hidden, not performing the effecting and associating steps.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to add an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option.

14. The method of Claim 13, further comprising:
prompting the user to enter authentication information; and
prompting the user at least one of to attach a file, enter a pathname to the file; and to record a message to play to an authenticated user.

15. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is to delete an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option.

16. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:
prompting the user to enter authentication information;

validating the entered authentication information;
when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the effecting step; and
when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the effecting step.

17. The method of Claim 3, wherein the user is provided with all of the options.

18. The method of Claim 1, wherein the menu structure is associated with a server-based account of the user and further comprising, before the receiving step:
prompting the user for authentication information;
receiving the authentication information;
validating the authentication information;
when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the receiving step; and
when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the receiving step.

19. The method of Claim 6, further comprising:
selecting a shortcut code and associating the shortcut code with the new navigation path, whereby the user selects the new navigation path by entering the shortcut code.

20. The method of Claim 1, wherein the change request is received through at least one of an audio and visual interface.

21. The method of Claim 1, wherein the requested change is an edit to a new navigation path previously configured by the user.

22. The method of Claim 11, further comprising:
restoring the hidden at least one of a menu and an option.

23. The method of Claim 1, wherein the IVR is associated with a plurality of user accounts, each user account corresponding to a unique user, wherein each user has a corresponding set of changes to the menu structure, and wherein the sets of changes are different from one another.

24. A computer readable medium comprising instructions to perform the steps of Claim 1.

25. A logic circuit configured to perform the steps of Claim 1.

26. An Interactive Voice Response unit (IVR), comprising:
a processor operable to:

a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure;

receive, from the user, a request to change the menu wherein, the request to change the menu structure is one or more of a request to hide a portion of the plurality of menus and a request to require authentication for a portion of the plurality of menus;

effect the requested change to the menu structure; and

associate the changed menu structure with the requesting user.

27. The IVR of Claim 26, further comprising:

resource cards to handle digit collection from dual tone multi-frequency telephones,

automatic speech recognition resources to detect user voice responses, and voice processing resources to record the user's prompts.

28. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the processor is further operable to provide the user with at least two of the following options:

creating a new navigation path;

hiding a menu option;

editing a new navigation path;

adding an authentication requirement to a selected menu; and

deleting an authentication requirement from a selected menu.

29. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change includes creation of new navigation path.

30. The IVR of Claim 28, wherein the effecting and associating functions comprise the operations of:

creating a new navigation path at a location selected by the user;

saving the new navigation path in a configuration file associated with the user;

and

recording a prompt from the user to indicate the new navigation path.

31. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is a change to a new navigation path configured by the user.

32. The IVR of Claim 30, wherein, in the creating and saving operations, a current position vector of the user is saved in a file associated with the user.

33. The IVR of Claim 30, wherein the processor is further operable to play the recorded prompt to the user the next time the user is serviced by the IVR.

34. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to hide at least one of a menu and an option.

35. The IVR of Claim 34, wherein the effecting and associating functions comprise the operations of:

adding the at least one of a menu and an option to a set of menus and/or options to hide in a selected navigation path; and

saving the modified set of menus and/or options in a configuration file associated with the user.

36. The IVR of Claim 34, wherein the processor is further operable to receive a request from the user to play the hidden at least one of a menu and an option and play the at least one of a menu and an option to the user.

37. The IVR of Claim 36, wherein the processor is further operable to:
determine whether the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden;

when the at least one of a menu and an option is eligible to be hidden, perform the effecting and associating functions; and

when the at least one of a menu and an option is ineligible to be hidden, not perform the effecting and associating functions.

38. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to add an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option.

39. The IVR of Claim 38, wherein the processor is further operable to:
prompt the user to enter authentication information; and
prompt the user at least one of to attach a file, enter a pathname to the file; and to record a message to play to an authenticated user.

40. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is to delete an authentication requirement associated with at least one of a menu and an option.

41. The IVR of Claim 40, wherein the processor is further operable to:
prompt the user to enter authentication information;
validate the entered authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, perform the effecting function; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not perform the effecting function.

42. The IVR of Claim 28, wherein the user is provided with all of the options.

43. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the menu structure is associated with a server-based account of the user and wherein the processor is further operable to perform, before the receiving function, the functions of:

prompting the user for authentication information;

receiving the authentication information;

validating the authentication information;

when the authentication information is successfully validated, performing the receiving function; and

when the authentication information is unsuccessfully validated, not performing the receiving function.

44. The IVR of Claim 29, wherein the processor is further operable to select a shortcut code and associate the shortcut code with the new navigation path, whereby the user selects the new navigation path by entering the shortcut code.

45. The IVR of Claim 26, further comprising:

at least one of an audio and visual interface.

46. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the requested change is an edit to a new navigation path previously configured by the user.

47. The IVR of Claim 36, wherein the processor is further operable to restore the hidden at least one of a menu and an option.

48. The IVR of Claim 26, wherein the IVR is associated with a plurality of user accounts, each user account corresponding to a unique user, wherein each user has a corresponding set of changes to the menu structure, and wherein the sets of changes are different from one another.

49. An electronic memory in a contact center, comprising:

first and second user identifiers;

a menu structure comprising a plurality of menus, each menu comprising a plurality of options that are selectable by a user, wherein the plurality of menus and each menu's respective plurality of options define a plurality of potential navigation paths for the user through the menu structure;

a first set of changes to the menu structure associated with the first user identifier; and

a second set of changes to the menu structure associated with the second user identifier, wherein the first and second sets are different, and

wherein, one or more of the first and second set of changes to the menu structure include one or more of a request to hide a portion of a menu and a request to require authentication for a portion of a menu.

(ix) EVIDENCE APPENDIX.

NONE.

(x) RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX.

None.